Air Force Portal:

Air Education, Training Command takes quantum jump in web technology

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AETC-NS)–Air Education and Training Command members will soon gain exciting new information technology capabilities on their desktop computers via the Air Force Portal, a Web-based, single-point entry to access a variety of online information resources and services.

The Air Force Portal, also known as My.AF, is part of a new, fast-paced strategy to migrate the Air Force's information technology systems to the vision of "One Air Force - One Network." The service's goal is to quickly move into a new technological age by providing a My.AF account to every Air Force member by July.

"Through One Air Force - One Network, the Air Force is changing how we leverage information technology to improve combat effectiveness and daily mission performance," said Lt. Gen. John L. Woodward Jr., Air Force deputy chief of staff for communications and information.

The AETC Computer Systems Squadron here is laying the groundwork to implement the Portal throughout the command.

Efforts are underway to Web-enable and consolidate mission and administrative processes and computer systems Air Force-wide. This will allow airmen to conduct operations more reliably and efficiently with "24/7" worldwide access to Air Force applications and information, said Master Sgt. Russ Williams, AETC Portal action officer.

"The Portal will be hosted on the Global Combat Support System, which will also provide a path for integrating applications onto the Portal," said Lt. Col. Dave Packham, Air Force Portal focus group leader. "Our goal, as defined by the chief of staff, is to have a fully capable portal by Jul. 1, 2001."

As AETC CSS completes the initial account rollout, each base's communications squadron will assume local administration of the accounts.

Those who already have an established e-mail account in AETC will receive an official "congratulations" e-mail containing a My.AF user-ID in the next few months. The e-mail will outline general information and detailed instructions necessary to activate a My.AF account.

My.AF will enable near "real-time" situational awareness, information sharing and information alignment to specific functional areas.

"Navigating My.AF will be similar to getting around on the Internet," said Williams. "Users can customize their view of the Portal to match their individual requirements and mission needs."

Some personalized settings include links to Aerospace Expeditionary Force updates, weather, news, functional business applications, publications and forms, and a myriad of other options.

My.AF will also expand

A look at a My.AF desktop screen with some of the options available to Air Force members. The Air Force Portal is a computer desktop that various links to web pages. The service's goal is to quickly move into a new technological age by providing a My.AF account to every Air Force member by July.

to include self-service capabilities such as the Air Force Operations Resource Management System, providing real-time training and flight data. Other resources include: My Money, for civilian pay inquiries; e-LES, for military leave and earning statement information; and v-MPF, for access to military personnel data.

My.AF is one piece of the overall information technology modernization effort, which includes consolidating e-mail servers to lower costs, reduce training requirements and improve information assurance.

The modernization efforts also include the Air Force White Pages, which are designed to enhance locator services for active duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian personnel, as well as permit Web-based e-mail links.

"(My.AF) is indeed a quantum jump in technology and will likely have a far reaching impact on accomplishing the Air Force mission anywhere, anytime," said Williams.

The development of the Air Force Portal complements the service's information technology vision, which is to provide "mission success across the spectrum of operations ... the right information, in the right format, to the right place, at the right time."

More information about the Air Force Portal is available at the AETC Portal Web site, https://www.aetc.af.mil/css/SCI/s03t0035.htm.

The site contains articles, instructions, general information and links to other portal information Web sites. *(Courtesy of Air Education and Training Command news service)*

DoD working to improve deployment tracking

WASHINGTON – Department of Defense and the services are now keeping a closer eye on how many days service members spend away from home.

The 2000 National Defense Authorization Act mandated that the services report how many days each service member spends deployed. The services must report to DOD, and DOD then must report to Congress. The first report to Congress is due in March 2002.

Air Force Lt. Col. Mike Stark, an official in the Pentagon's Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate, explained that DOD is trying to reduce the number of days service members are deployed. And to keep these numbers down, Congress provided a financial disincentive to the Defense Department.

Any service member deployed more than 400 days in the previous two years will receive $100 for each additional deployment day past 400, Stark said. The days need not be concurrent. Officials are calling the plan the "Perstempo Program." "Personnel tempo" basically indicates how busy service members are.

Stark explained perstempo reporting began Oct. 1, 2000. Only deployed days past that date count toward the additional payment. So, conceivably, heavily deployed service members may be eligible

for the "high-deployment per diem" as early as November 2001, he said.

Eventually, the services will report deployment days on members' military leave and earning statements, but all the services aren't to this point yet. The Marines began including the figure on March LESs, which members should have received about April 1. The Army and Navy are currently testing the system in some areas, and the Air Force is still working out the details, Stark said.

Not all days away from home count toward the high-deployment per diem. Stark said duty in garrison (such as overnight guard duty or charge of quarters) and individual training don't count. But deployments for operations and exercises, even at home station, do count toward the payments.

DOD has a vested interest in keeping deployment days down, Stark said. "The majority of our service members enjoy doing what they train to do, but you can have too much of a good thing," he said. "If we overdo it, that effects service members' quality of life. That has a ripple affect on retention, which in turn affects recruiting when the word gets out that we're overtaxing people."